

# SACRED DANCE GUILD JOURNAL

www.sacreddanceguild.org

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## Festival 2003 - "Paths of Radiance"

Thursday, July 17 to Tuesday, July 22, 2003

Scripps College in Claremont, California

When I think of California, I think about the sunshine and how it radiates its warmth and energy to each of us. Sacred Dance does that too; it fills our hearts and bodies with warmth and love; it radiates blessings upon each of us and illuminates our lives with so much peace and joy that we can't help but share it with others.

We are very excited to be hosting the Sacred Dance Guild Festival from Thursday, July 17 to Tuesday, July 22, 2003, right here in sunny Southern California. It will be held at Scripps College in Claremont. It is a beautiful, scenic 30-acre campus. The architecture of the buildings reflects our Spanish heritage. The grounds contain spacious vistas, intimate courtyards and 18 recycling fountains. We are fortunate to have this entire campus reserved for only our group. Being just ten minutes from Ontario airport, we can also avoid the hassles of LAX. The surrounding community is charming and safe.

I am inviting each of you to be a part of it. If you have never been to a Festival, here is the perfect opportunity to meet other sacred dancers from all over the country, take classes, see sacred dance performances, share our own dances, and have fun. We are in the process of selecting a wonderful and professional faculty to present dances from various disciplines and cultures. Here is just one example: Ruth St. Denis is the founder of our Sacred Dance Guild. We have a woman who studied and danced with her and will present authentic dances and ma-

terials on her. We hope to highlight other pioneers in dance from California also. As soon as our presenters are confirmed, we will get the word out. We promise an exciting and fun time dancing, watching and celebrating dance from morning to evening. I truly hope every member and friend who is interested in Sacred Dance will join us.

One of the other very important ways you can be involved is to be part of our prayer team. Will you pray for the envisioning committee as they consider all the details involved in this Festival? Since the SDG is an interfaith organization, some of the faith experiences offered may be different from our own. How do we do this and remain sensitive to everyone's faith? We respect each person and his/her belief system. We are not pushing "religion"

but offering various spiritual experiences in movement from which one can choose. I believe we will find these different paths lead us to an enriching and embracing love for each other.

Mark July 17-22, 2003, on your calendar now. We will look forward to seeing you at the Festival.

Note: We are one hour from beaches, mountains, deserts and Disneyland. While you are here, why not consider visiting San Diego, Santa Barbara or even San Francisco. If time is limited, you can visit "California Adventure," part of the new Disneyland Park.

May the God Peace and the Peace of God be with you,

*Stella Matsuda and Cathy Saine,  
Co-Directors,  
Festival 2003*



The Sacred Dance Guild Executive Board (front row from left) Kathryn Mihelick, Karen Josephson, Wendy Morrell, P. Merle Wade, (back row from left) Carla Kramer, Phyllis Stonebrook, Susan Johnson, Ellen Roberts Young, Connie Tyler.



# President's Letter

*Fount of all life, dancing in bliss  
Breaking down walls, making new spaces.*  
—United Theological College, Bangalore, India

The explosion into the life of the planet of the Internet has broken down walls of communication, and provided new spaces for the exchange of information. During the last several months Sacred Dance Guild has set up some Internet list serves to facilitate business, and to share thoughts and ideas.

The Executive Board has one, which allows us to act more quickly on issues rather than waiting for our next meeting, which could be three months away. The Board-at-Large and the Chapters and Regions each have one, which have generated some lively dialogue practically, artistically and theologically. This has also been the case for the Catholic list serve, which was set up by Kathryn Mihelick and Michele White, and is open to Sacred Dance Guild members and non-Catholics. One of the topics that generated a great deal of discussion this spring was the language we use concerning what we do when we dance in worship or liturgy.

"Offering," "ministry," and "prayer" were the most common terms used. I argued for the concept of, not necessarily the word, "performance." The bulk of my argument can be found in this JOURNAL, as well as several responses by others, both in support and in opposition. I might add that "dance" is still a controversial and forbidden word in some settings, which can only hear and accept "movement." This exchange of experience and theology is vital to the growth of us all as

we listen to the voices of our fellow dancers and struggle with our own journeys. Every church with a music choir does not have a dance choir. It can be a lonely, pioneering effort to establish dance as an important component in worship or liturgy. The Internet has provided us an opportunity to feel more intimately a part of a wider community of support and encouragement.

Other topics which have begun to surface, and which could bear fruit are: What is sacred dance? How does being interfaith benefit and hinder Sacred Dance Guild? (What challenges being an interfaith carry with it and how best do we address them?) How could Sacred Dance Guild be defined? I would offer a simple definition: Sacred Dance Guild is an amalgam of people for whom understanding the moving body is an important vehicle for the understanding of God.

Last month a new list serve was created for all interested SDG members. If you would like to be a part of these and other discussions, contact our webmaster Connie at [connie@deephum.com](mailto:connie@deephum.com). If you would like to join Catholic group contact webmaster Michele at [mmmw@speedsite.com](mailto:mmmw@speedsite.com). Our dancing font of life is breaking down barriers. Take advantage of it.

In late August I represented all of you, the Sacred Dance Guild, at the Global Dance Forum held in Duesseldorf, Germany and sponsored by the World Dance Alliance. News about that in the next JOURNAL.



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**Deadlines for the JOURNAL:** August 15, November 15 and March 15. Deadlines for the Events Calendar are the same as for the Journal. Articles of 500 words or less, dance activity, chapter/region/membership news, letters and black and white/color photographs should be sent by deadline dates to: Sacred Dance Guild Journal, Toni Intravala, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.



Photo by Fr. Ed Coppinger

## Weaving a Web Class by Fr. Ed Coppinger



## EDITORIAL

I am one of the SDG members who did not have the privilege to be a part of the Festival this summer. As many of you who did not get the chance probably feel the same as I do. We missed the opportunity to be refreshed and ready for the fall sacred dance events.

I understand from a note here and there that there is nothing in the *Journal* on becoming a member of the Sacred Dance Guild. We do have membership brochures which are quite lovely, but, if you are now reading this editorial, you can write me (Toni' Intravaia, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, Illinois 62901) and I will gladly send you all the material you need or you can phone me 618-457-8603 or you can go to Sacred Dance Guild Web-Site: [www.sacreddanceguild.org](http://www.sacreddanceguild.org).

There's great hope as I write this almost a year from the 9-11 happening of last year. The artists, God's neat creations, are hard at work despite the tragedy. And I know from the many letters received that the Sacred Dance Guild members are also creating in a new, not sorrow ridden, way to glorify the Almighty.

"World Religions and Dance," this issue's theme should be of interest to all readers. For the next issue we will feature Festival 2003. But, don't forget, the *Journal* needs to have what you are doing, what you have done, or what you will do!

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Mary Jane Wolbers, archivist  
In re: The SDG Archives Honor Roll

It is with great pleasure and gratitude that I acknowledge donations to the Guild Archives and submit to you the Honor Roll:

### High Honors

Forrest Coggan  
Wendy Morrell  
Joan Sparrow

### Honors

Constitution Chapter of SDG  
D. Jayne Edwards  
Joann Flanigan  
Helen Gray  
Virginia Huffine  
Toni' Intravaia  
Sue Johnson  
Karen Josephson  
Ruth Richardson  
Southern CA Chapter of SDG  
Phyllis Stonebrook  
Ethel Tibetts (sister of Robert Storer)  
Kay Troxell  
P. Merle Wade  
Ellen Young

On July 19<sup>th</sup>, a group from Festival 2002 toured the Archives at the University of New Hampshire where our Archives are held. Thanks to those who contributed to the car pool for this trip.

I do not drive, but I do a lot of phoning! Therefore, if any of you members know of a member who has or will be dropping her membership, please call her/him, or if you know of someone who would like to be a member, call her/him. Or if you need to have someone do your phoning for membership, just give me a call, a postcard, or letter, and I will follow this up! I am reminded of a time when Doug Adams was president. He had a neat way of rousing attention. As I remember he asked us to "Everyone reach one." Perhaps we could do the same with reference to membership in the Guild which gives us all so much. In other words this might be a way for us to show our thanks!

As I was proofing the section on "Is it Dance or is it Performance?" I could not help but remember the first time I had a group do "Ave Maria" in the 40s, people watching this at National Music Camp, Interlochen, Michigan, remarked "This is embarrassing to watch, you just do not dance to religious music." Many times since I have borrowed and added to the saying by St. Augustine: "Danced prayer is total prayer." Here at St. Francis Xavier we have the "Motion Choir." I think the first time we were photographed and written about in the local paper, we were labeled "Movement Choir." Words always seem to get in the artist's way, in faith's way. Maybe we are like Snoopy who says: "If you can't say it, just dance it!"

Somehow as I have read and reread both material coming in by post or by e-mail, I keep wondering if, at this time, we are trying to reinvent the wheel in our discussions on sacred dance definition, on performance, on beliefs. Perhaps we are missing the respect that we need to give each other since we state that "providing members with information and opportunities for enriching their faith."

Please continue to send your news, as well as dates for the Calendar of Events, to Toni' Intravaia, Editor, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901, and your news from regions and chapters to Director of Regions and Chapters, P. Merle Wade, 611 Plainfield Avenue, Plainfield, NJ 07060-2118. The deadlines are August 15, November 15 and March 15.

## The Gift that Keeps on Giving

Did you know there is a charitable giving technique that costs you nothing while you are living, actually benefits your estate, and provides your favorite charity (SACRED DANCE GUILD!) with income?

It's called a CRAT or Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust. If you would like more information on this exciting way Guild members (and others!) could benefit SDG, their heirs, and themselves, please contact SDG Treasurer, Sue Johnson, by email at [suesyj@mindspring.com](mailto:suesyj@mindspring.com) or by mail at 7818 Byrds Nest Pass, Annandale, VA 22003-1545.

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# From Audio Tapes, from Programs, from Inserts, from Phone Calls - AN INTERESTING REPORT ON THE FESTIVAL 2002

by Toni' Intravaia, who was not there:

Between singing, dancing, and voting, the Executive Board Meeting took care of business at Festival 2002. It took at least three hours to accomplish the agenda with reports and decision making and preparation for the Board At Large Meeting. Having been to Festivals before, these meetings are really the meat of our Guild and keep us moving forward. In future Journals, you will be getting memos of those meetings.

This is Sunday August 18th and I have been serenaded by the Executive Board members. Karen Josephson had asked each of us to select a song to be sung at the opening of the Executive Board Meeting! Thank you, one and all. This audio tape also included all the songs (with changed lyrics) to pay a tribute to Mary Jane Wolbers. I congratulate you for your efforts especially the changing voices on the "Indian Love Call." For a moment I thought it was a boys choir! Congratulations, Mary Jane. I still remember our first meeting back in 1958 - don't remember the place - but you asked me to come and teach for a workshop. That was when I lived in West Virginia!

I am sure all the SDG readers are envious of the trip you made to the Canterbury Shaker Village. As some of you know I have been directing Doris Humphrey's "Shaker Dance" from Labanotation for many years. And in so doing I have become most interested in the Shakers. And, I have never been to the Canterbury Village. The brochures are most inviting. For those of you SDG readers who are not familiar with the Shakers, they came to America to seek freedom - they have often been called the "shaking Quakers." They lived apart - men from women - so therefore they are extinct.

They practiced equality of sexes and races; they had common ownership of goods and tried to make their villages earthly heavens.

The Cathedral of the Pines is a memorial and a place to worship. As I was reading the brochure, the only thought that passed through my mind was that I wish that all of you, including me, could go there right now. Briefly, its history is very unusual. "Atop a hill in southwestern New Hampshire is a most unusual place of worship. It is not a place of stained glass windows and massive domes created by man but a place of natural beauty created by nature. It is also a war memorial dedicated to those men and women who gave their lives in the service of their country. It is the Cathedral of the Pines located in Rindge, New Hampshire. Originally selected by Lt. Sanderson Sloane and his wife, Margaret, as a place to build their home when he returned from World War II, the Cathedral was created by his parents, Dr. Douglas and Sibyl Sloan, after learning that "Sandy" had lost his life when the B-17 bomber he piloted was shot down over Germany in 1944."

The members attending Festival 2002 held a "Dona Nobis Pacem" Worship Service there on Thursday, July 18 with dance, music, and the art that is nature's alone. Two Native American Sign Language "My Help Is In The Mountain" and "Eagle Feather Dance" were two parts of the service. The poems are:

Eagle Poem by Joy Harjo: To pray you open your whole self/To sky, to earth, to sun, to moon/To one whole self that is you./And know there is more,/That you



**God Gave  
Us Sons  
Sharing -  
Karen  
Josephson**

Photo by  
Kathlene Pettycrew

can't see, can't hear/Can't know except in moments/Steadily growing and in languages/That aren't always sound/But other circles of motion./Like Eagle that Sunday morning/Over Salt River, circled in blue sky./In wind, swept our hearts clean/With sacred wings./We see you, see ourselves/And know that we must take / The utmost care and kindness/In all things./Breathe in, knowing we are made of all this,/And breathe knowing we are truly blessed/Because we are born, and die soon/Within a true circle of motion./Like Eagle rounding out the morning,/Inside us./We pray that it will be done in beauty,/In beauty.

And:

My Help is in the Mountain by Nancy Wood: My help is in the mountain/Where I take myself to heal/the earthly wounds/that people give to me./I find a rock with sun on it,/and a stream where the water runs gentle,/and the trees which one by one /give me company./So must I stay for along time,/until I have grown from the rock,/and the stream is running through me,/and I cannot tell myself from one tall tree./Then I know that nothing touches me,/nor makes me run away./My help is in the mountain/That I take away with me.

As I read the many pages of the week's program, I find that I really missed a great Festival. One of the concerts featured the Angkor Dance Troupe. This group is nationally recognized as one of the most experienced and accomplished Cambodian dance ensembles performing. The seventy-member ensemble performed both classical and folk dance. The Cambodian Classical Dance dates to 700 AD. It is sometimes called court dance or Cambodia's royal ballet. The folk dances come from rural Cambodia and depict aspects of everyday village life.



Photo by Kathlene Pettycrew

**Shaker Dancers, Congregational Church, Rindge, NH  
Sacred Dance Guild Festival 2002**



# SDG IDEA CORNER

## God Loves All in the East and West

By Margaret Taylor Doane

The lyrics of "In Christ There is No East and West" by John Oxenhain have been adapted by both Grace Moore and Ruth Duck in recent years. Because it is important for children (8-12 year olds) to grasp its important message and to dramatize it as a circle-dance of love, I offer some simplifications for use with children:

- 1) God loves all in the East and West  
And those in the South and North  
As one great human family  
Throughout this whole wide earth.
- 2) Join hands then people of all faiths  
Whate'er our race may be;  
All children of the living God  
Are surely kin to me.
- 3) As friends now greet both East and West  
As friends greet South and North  
And share our fellowship of love  
Throughout this whole wide earth.

This is a great hymn of caring love of all in any culture, faith, or race because it is based on Christ's all-encompassing love. Although it is described in my previous books: Dramatic Dance with Children and Hymns in Action, here I suggest a simpler way for children.

**Stanza 1** remains about the same. Children stand in a circle and number off: 1,2,1,2 around the circle. (Or a strip of crepe paper can be pinned on the younger children with alternate colors of blue or yellow.)

Each "one" turns to the right; each "two" turns to the left. They extend right hands and now are ready for a "grand chain" of greeting as they progress to the next person with left hands touching, etc.

### Stanza 2

**Join hands then peoples of all faiths what'ever your race may be** - Everyone faces center and joins the hands of those on either side and circle to the right during these lines.

**All children of the living God** - the "ones" release the joined hands, take a step forward and then join hands with other "ones." They lift their joined hands as they sing "the living God."

At the same time as hands are released, the "twos" join hands with the other "twos" forming an outer circle.

**Are surely kin to me** - The "twos" still holding hands duck under the high held arms of the "ones" who now lower their arms behind the "twos." With hands still joined a circle of friendship has been interwoven!

In the 1965 proclamation of Pope Paul VI, he said that the Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in non-Christian reli-

## SPIRITUAL

Music: "Were You There" Choreography: Sylvia Bryant

### Step 1

#### Starting Position - Were you there

Stand straight - legs slightly apart - arms down to the side. Start with the right hand, reaching across the body to the left side and circling the arm to the right, waist level.

#### When they crucified My Lawd

Start lifting the right arm upward in a flexed position. Elbows leading and gradually extending the arms over head, palms facing away from the body.

Repeat the sequence with the left arm extending that arm on My Lawd.

Counts - 8

### Step 2

#### Were you there when they crucified My Lawd

Repeat all of Step 1

Counts - 8

### Step 3

#### Oh Oh Oh --- Sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble

Step forward with the right foot, twisting the trunk and the head in the same

direction. At the same time lowering the extended arms down in a flexed position to the waist. Taking the entire body into a contraction.

Repeat the same sequence on the left side. Then again on the right side.

#### Sometimes it causes me to

Stay in the contraction, bring hands together, take the right foot behind the left foot. Lean the body backward going into a hyper-extension. Focus the head upward.

Counts - 4

#### Tremble, tremble, tremble

Take three jumps forward, jumping forward every time you say Tremble. As you jump forward, go in a releve bringing the arms up above the head reaching for the ceiling and shaking the entire arms as you focus up.

Counts - 4

All the other movements are exactly the same with the exception of the following verses:

#### Verse 2 - Were you there when they nailed Him to the tree?

Bring the arms over the head, focusing on the hands. Stand on your tip toes. Starting with your right hand, slap the back of the left hand one time on Nailed. Then open the arms slowly to the side, keeping them fully extended and lowering the body to the original position. Legs together, feet parallel to the floor. Head focusing down toward the floor.

Repeat the above sequence again and all the other movements will be same as in the first verse.

Counts - 8

#### Verse 3 - Were you there when they laid Him in the tomb?

Step to the right side on the right foot, knees are slightly bent. As you step to the right side, reach out toward the floor as if placing something on the floor, and then slowly bring the arms into the body and slowly take the arms upward and have the head follow the arms upward. The body should be in a lunge position, right leg in front is slightly bent, left leg in back is fully extended. Both feet should remain flat on the floor.

Count - 8

Repeat the chorus again concluding the dance.

gions and calls us to love all as brothers and sisters. Because we know that we are all children of one Creator, we can include all people as our "kin;" and so we are ready to sing the last stanza with greetings to all as "friends."

**As friends now greet both East and West** - Remain with arms interwoven and all sway to the right, smiling at others.

**As friends greet South and North** - All sway to the left, smiling at each other.

**And share this fellowship of love** - Everyone releases the clasped hands, lowers the arms and as the arms are close to the thigh, turns around to face outward.

**Throughout this whole wide earth** - Everyone takes two steps outward and thrusts

the arms in a forward reach to all outside their circle with a smile and this caring gesture of sharing love.

If the group presents this hymn in a church service, these last two lines may be repeated as the children move down to their seats in front rows, or possibly walk down the aisles, smiling at all of the seated congregation. Hymns of Christian love become alive with mutual smiling. In one congregation, the whole last stanza was repeated as the children recessed out the aisles and right out to the street where they gathered and sang the folk "Amen!" Many of the congregation, who had risen to sing the last stanza, turned to watch the children carrying the message outside the church. Alleluia!



# WORLD RELIGIONS AND DANCE

## Church/Religious Art Early Connections

By Forrest W. Coggan (This was compiled at the suggestion of Margaret Taylor Doane.)

I received Christian Baptism on the seventeenth day of April, 1927. As Forrest Winston Coggan, in Peoples Church at East Lansing, Michigan by N.A. McCune, Minister in an interdenominational church serving the international population of the Michigan State College Community. I was born just east of this town in what was known as the Historic Marble Community. We had a small church which met in the one-room school house donated by Mr. Marble in the pioneer days. My grandfather, the Reverend Adam Brown, was a circuit rider for the Methodist Church in the upper part of lower Michigan, serving many smaller isolated churches, including an Indian Mission.

My mother and father, Blanche Brown and Bernard Coggan, returned to Michigan after their first child, Bernard Jr., was born in 1918, leaving multicultural duties in Gary, Indiana, to answer the call of the Michigan Sunday School Association/Michigan Council of Churches. They were to promote the growth of the Sunday School and Religious Education movement throughout the state. In the process, my father was confirmed through laying on of hands by officials of five denominations and often referred to as Reverend Coggan. My parents were active in the founding of neighborhood congregations, just as Blanche's parents had been even into their elder years. The years of the great depression caused a complete collapse of the administrative structure for this movement.

My father later became director of Religious Education at Congregational Methodist Episcopal Church in Lansing, Michigan. The minister was E. Stanley Coors who later became bishop of the Methodist Church in Minnesota. My mother became director of Youth Religious Education programs for the very old Lansing Unitarian Universalist Church which was located just across the street from C.M.E. church. My sister, Nadine, and myself were active in both churches as mother later came also to direct youth programs at CME when the Universalist Church closed its doors. We recall with great warmth the years and events shared there. Nadine, two years my junior, was years later married in the new Sabina Chapel at that same CME church. Our brother Bernard (Nard/Sandy) had gone on into engineering, being eight years my senior.

In the great church, under the leadership of Reverend Coors, our family helped establish a rich worship and arts program

for teens and young adults. Numerous biblical plays and productions, recitals, worship rituals, and arts workshops made good use of the rather extensive facilities provided. One larger, poetic pageant, written by mother, and directed by me, was held several times in the main sanctuary. It was called "Homage to Music" and dedicated to Hans Wilde. A pool of outstanding talent was attracted to this place. Much gratitude is due to the visionary faith of Dr. Coors, a dear and valued friend.

Concurrent to this, Nadine and I were deeply involved in formal training at excellent local studios in both drama and dance. It was through these contacts that I first made the connection with Ted Shawn and later Ruth St. Denis and moving works on

religious, folk and ethnic, which for me had such deeper philosophical dimension and deep philosophical choreography for me.

An interesting anecdote is that of a daughter church of People's Church where I was baptized, many years later became the sponsor of two large productions during my national tours. These were *The Labyrinth* (Man's Heritage of Spiritual Search), and *Ladder to the Stars* (World's Major Religions). The latter was a multi-art pageant written by my mother, both works under my direction. My mother and father had helped bring this new Edgewood People's Church into being. The casts and crews were part of the youth and young adults programs. The Minister was Truman Morrison and his wife Eleanor was in charge of youth development.



Photo by Fr. Ed Coppinger

Cathedral of Pines, Rindge, NH  
Sacred Dance Guild Festival 2002

## Join the dialogue on Liturgical Dance in the Roman Catholic Church

Michele Marie White and Kathryn Mihelick have set up an email list serve for dialogue on issues of concern to supporters of liturgical dance in the Roman Catholic Church. The list serve will, among other things, discuss how to follow up on Kathryn's attempt to influence the Vatican's stance on sacred dance by placing the topic before the United States Bishops. See "Taking a Stance on Dance" (*Sacred Dance Guild Journal* Spring, 2001,

Volume 43, No. 3) and "News Flash" (Fall, 2002, Volume 44, Number 1).

A list serve is a way for a group of people to discuss an issue together over the internet. A message sent to the list goes to the whole group. If you are interested in being on this list serve, please send your name and email address to [michele@workinmotion.net](mailto:michele@workinmotion.net) as soon as possible. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Kathryn at 330-688-8806.



# Margaret's New Book

By Jeannine Bunyan

A new book by Margaret Taylor Doane is always an event in the sacred dance world. It has been a great honor for me to collaborate with Margaret on this recent release, *Soul to Sole with Seniors*.

We, who have experienced Margaret's beautiful spirit, know she is forever young in her positive outlook. Her opening chapter, "Here We Are," shows her sense of humor when she writes, "I am ready for God to call me Home any time, but as long as I'm still here, I thought I might as well write another book."

When Margaret invited me to write a chapter for this book, I was thrilled and happy to comply. She had long urged me to write a book, but until then I had been too busy "doing it" to find time to "write it!" Then I thought, "Only a chapter? Oh, I can do that!" At age 93, Margaret came to realize that with her limited stamina, the project was too demanding for her to accomplish alone. I was greatly honored but filled with trepidation. Then, with her typical gentle encouragement, she stretched me beyond my "comfort zone," as she has done so often with many others through the years.

It has been a marvelous growing experience for me to bask in the wisdom of this pioneer. The subtitle of the book is "Growing Spiritually Using Symbolic Movement." While gathering material, it

has been rewarding to become acquainted with ten talented, deeply spiritual authors. An interesting note is that all of them feel, as I do, that Margaret has been their personal mentor. Each contributor shares insights gained while adapting their movement ministry to be appropriate for our older citizens.

In my chapter, "Prayers That Move Us," I share three prayers that have helped me stay spiritually focused while living each day. Lily Tu in "Gratified To Serve God" speaks of dancers with palsy and diabetes. Dan Schlagel shares from his own experience with multiple sclerosis in "Looking With New Eyes." Elaine Friedrich has "Seniors On The Move" at her retirement community. Dosia Carlson, who contacted polio as a teenager, speaks as a wheelchair dancer in, "Moving In The Spirit." Roberta Grimm gives many practical ideas for "Dancing Through Life." Carla De Sola shares choreography from her video, "Movement Meditations to Songs From Taize."

The Christmas section begins with the usual wit of Doug Adams adapting ideas from his book *Dancing Christmas Carols*, so they are appropriate for "Dancing Together With Seniors." In her "Dancing In Worship and Ministry," Rosalie Branigan tells of her work with more active seniors, then offers simple adaptations for those less capable.

Ann Blessin's extensive experience in nursing homes and senior facilities assures us that all are "Equal In The Eyes Of God." Margaret closes the book by encouraging readers to, "Feel free to find new ways to bring new meaning to singing and dancing Christmas carols."

As our population ages, there will be increasing need for the suggestions offered in this book. We in movement ministry will be called to serve older citizens. "Use it or lose it" will be our motto! *Soul to Sole with Seniors* is an excellent resource to have at hand. All proceeds from sales go to the Margaret Taylor Doane Endowment for Dance In Worship and Education to continue support for dance courses at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, where many students pursue the M.Div. and M.A. with emphasis on liturgical dance. *Soul to Sole with Seniors* is available from The Sharing Company, 6226 Bernhard Ave., Richmond, CA 94805-1658. (\$9.95 + S&H \$3.00)

## Lifestyle

By Michael Weiskopf  
(From *Dance Spirit*, October, 2001)

Dance Represents The Spirit of America!

We will all remember where we were and what we were doing on September 11, 2001. America and the world will never be the same as a result of the acts of a handful of maniacs. In the face of disaster, terrorism and uncertainty, many of us question the meaning of our daily activities. But these activities, especially training and performing hold great meaning.

In times like these, it is important for artists to express the feelings engendered by world events. As dancers it is our mission to do so. Dance expresses what words and music alone cannot. Our movements are watched carefully, they color our perceptions and permit our intellect and emotions to resonate.

Though our cities have been damaged and we are yet to face an undefined challenge, our spirit has been strengthened. Now, more than ever, all of us in the dance community need to feel empowered with a sense of responsibility to respond to and shape our environment. We at *Dance Spirit* are proud of the dance community's response and of our role in providing an editorial environment where our thoughts, deeds and creativity may be shared.

## Sacred Dance - that is, dance set apart in world cultures For worship, healing, or transformative purposes

(The following is a statement which I read as a member of the Training/Education Panel to the Americas Conference in Mexico City, 1995 with 130 attendees from eleven countries.)

By Forrest W. Coggan

In sacred dance forms, globally, I identify three areas of expression: The dance for meditation and self growth; The communal/community dance, where the search for spiritual understanding or group enlightenment is aided by the joining of metaphysical powers; and dance done in the role of the priest, shaman, healer, or intercessor, who acts on behalf of the individual or community. This last is often performed by one elected or selected due to his or her ability, through gift or age, to more easily access his or her own inner spiritual power.

The dance instrument is more than the body. Those dance works that I most admire, and those which I suspect will enjoy a long and respected life, possess some potent essence beyond the body and the conscious mind. An essence we may term "spirit" or spiritual-mystical.

Also in teaching of dance, we become

aware that those who are growing in techniques of all kinds, physical and psychological, may or may not have access to - within their life experience- deeper levels of spiritual insight and human compassion. Perhaps this is due to earlier belief structures. As teachers we commonly employ various techniques to release new dimensions within our students.

There are some intellectual methods which might assist those in spiritual need, both as choreographer and performing artist - such as certain designs in space, time and energy, which ring true at unconscious levels. There are also methods of silent, sometimes still, inward search and study which may aid in discovery of hidden sources within our individual selves. The resulting art is one of joining body, mind, and spirit to make our dance more powerful for the moment, and longer lasting in terms of cultural memory or usefulness.



# WALKING WITH BOB

By Virginia Huffine

I have studied dance from my childhood, with the major part of my training taking place in New York. While my training in ballet at the Chalif School was my early love, I had no desire to pursue it, and my later New York studies were in modern dance with Ingeborg Torrup, ethnic dance with Michael Herman, and Hindu dance with Vira Grant. My marriage took me away from New York, but I practiced my dancing wherever we went. In 1961, my husband's work took us to Boston, Massachusetts and we settled in the pleasant suburb of Winchester. We were Unitarians, and we quickly joined the Winchester Unitarian Church where the minister was none other than Robert Storer!

This charming man talked at length with us about our earlier years, and when he learned that I was a dancer, he was overjoyed! He told me that he, too, was a dancer, though he had no longer performed, and that he coached a group of teenage girls from his church to dance in appropriate parts of the church service. He called the group his "Motion Choir," and the dancing was "liturgical dance" or, as he preferred, "sacred dance." He explained that he was also directing a group of would-be actors from the church, and he was not able to find time to do both jobs. He begged me to consider taking over the "Motion Choir" right away! I was dazed by all this, but I decided to say "Yes." Thus began what was to be the most delightful six years of my "dance career." I only called him Doctor Storer once, and he immediately informed me that his name was Bob, and he had no time for anything longer. I was continually amazed at Bob's knowledge of dance of all sorts, but especially of the world of sacred dance.

I had never heard of sacred or liturgical dance or of any sort of dancing in church, but Bob assured me that it was very real and that I was in the thick of it. He told me of his own introduction to this rapidly developing field of dance. He had studied modern dance with one of its masters, Ted Shawn, who remained a lifetime friend, as did his wife, Ruth St. Denis (better known as "Miss Ruth"). It was 1932 and Bob was a student of Meadville Theological Seminary in Illinois, when a dynamic young dancer blew into town. She was Erika Thimey, a German dancer who had studied modern dance under the great German dancer/teacher, Mary Wigman. Erika had come to Chicago to teach modern dance, and she had found a good friend. Dr. John Ogden Vogt, the minister of the Unitarian Church on the Meadville campus, had written books on worship and the arts, and he saw Erika as the model of a creative worshipper. Erika told him of her desire to create a Christmas Pageant with active dancing in the telling of the Nativity story. They proceeded with this, and made lots of use of Bob's dancing skills.

Erika's Christmas Pageant was a great success. Bob and many others considered it to be the first true "sacred dance" to be performed in the United States. Bob had had a significant part in it, and Erika asked him to work with her on a series of similar pageants dealing with other church events, such as Easter. While he was truly impressed with her dancing and her ability to create a beautifully danced story, he was also extremely busy with his Meadville classes and with the writing of his thesis, entitled "Dance as a Sacred Ritual." Thus, he felt that he could not spare the time that Erika's request would entail, and he regretfully turned her down.

Bob graduated from Meadville in 1937, and was immediately ordained as a Unitarian minister, and assigned to the First Parish Unitarian church of Dorchester, Massachusetts. He was to serve there for thirteen years. The church was old, and its parishioners were firmly set in their ways. Bob felt that they would not willingly accept any sort of dance in the service, but he quickly picked out the more daring members and privately coached them in ways to sell the idea of a "Motion Choir" to the congregation. To his surprise, the scheme worked, and rather suddenly that church had its "Motion Choir!" Bob knew when it was time to stop, and he was sure that the Choir gave him a means of having small doses of sacred dance in the service!

In the thirteen years of Bob's ministry at Dorchester, he devised many ways of making his sermons meaningful to his parishioners, old and young. He was blessed with the ability to persuade without irritating, and every member fondly remembered incidents when Bob had solved seemingly impossible problems. His audience rather quickly grew to accept, and then to love, his use of the "Motion Choir" to give a sort of visual reality to

his sermon. On one occasion, an elderly gentleman asked Bob to use the Choir at his funeral! Bob was taken by surprise, and mumbled an answer, but as he thought about it, he decided that it would be perfectly appropriate to have a small group of dancers in the procession if the relatives so requested.

In 1950, Bob became the Minister of the Winchester, Massachusetts Unitarian Church. It was different from Dorchester in many ways. The church was not old, the parishioners were younger and better educated, and there was a feeling of financial stability. Very important to Bob was the much greater space for his "Motion Choir." When I took charge of them in 1961, they were used to practicing in the empty basilica, but most of their dances during the actual service were in aisles and generally smaller floor areas. Thus, I began my coaching activity by trying to get their dances practiced in small spaces. They realized the need for this, and they went at it with a will. I was always proud of the way the girls jumped right in when we tried something new.

Bob wanted to use his "Motion Choir" several times during the service rather than have them concentrate on one long dance. They always led the opening "Processional," with Bob following in his glorious robe, and usually with the vocal choir following him. There were many spots in the Liturgy where we agreed that short dance segments (no more than five minutes) would be appropriate. I learned that Bob's one direction to the choir was: "Keep it Simple!" As he saw it, this meant "Keep it Short!" The dancers had not experienced modern dance before, and they were hesitant at first, but after much practice, they decided that they liked it, and they became quite good at devising choreography for their dances. They were prompt in arrival for



Photo by Mary Jane Wolbers

**SDG Festival 2002 participants dancing before the altar at Cathedral of the Pines, a national shrine in Rindge, NH. Worship service held during SDG Festival 2002.**



# GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

(Article on Sacred Dance Guild Festival, Franklin Pierce College, Rindge, New Hampshire July, 2002)

Presentation by Father Edmund T. Coppinger, Reported by Kat Pettycrew

During the Sacred Dance Guild Annual Festival at Franklin Pierce College, Rindge, New Hampshire, Father Edmund Coppinger presented "Connecting with the Web." This is not the web of the computer, but the web of Mother Nature. About twelve of us formed a circle, and each person was given a ball of brightly colored yarn. The instructions were "Hold on to the end of your yarn with one hand, and with the other hand throw the ball of yarn back and forth to one another across the circle, keeping hold of each new "loop" whenever the yarn comes to you. Also, from time to time, pass the yarn directly to the person on either side of you. Soon, a large colorful web emerges: when it has grown enough, each person grasps the web with both hands. Taking turns, each person pulls on the web, and every other person feels

the pull. The reason is that each person is connected to all.

Then we opened up for discussion the various ways and levels in which we are connected; the human, the emotional, the spiritual, etc. One example could be: if you like the "big bang" theory of the origin of the universe that we all come from the same original "stuff," thus we are cousins, and if you wish, brothers and sisters to the planets and stars. Another example is "genetic memory." We carry traces of the DNA of all our human ancestors, so there is deep in us a mysterious memory of all that has gone before. This is connected to C.G. Jung's "Archetypes" and his theory of the collective unconscious.

The web also calls to mind a connection with the various cultures that show special honor to their ancestors, and call

upon them for guidance. For example, the Lakota Nation calls upon the presence of all the ancestors before entering the purifying sweat lodge. Then there is the Christian tradition of the "Communion of the Saints" which I see as a soul connection founded on the love of God poured out in us. This is further enhanced by St. Paul's words in First Corinthians "If one member suffers, all the others suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the others share its joy." Chief Seattle wrote so movingly of his conviction that all things are connected. "All things are bound together. All things connect. What happens to the earth happens to the children of earth. Man has not woven the web of life. He is but one thread. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself." (*How Can One Sell the Air?* - Book Publishing Company, Summertown, TN., 1980) Perhaps you, right now, could come up with other ways we are connected.

We had great fun, playing with our web, or net, holding it at different angles, dancing under it, enmeshing ourselves, and feeling our connection. After the exercise, the web can be a decorative symbol. If you would like to recreate this activity, you will need the following materials: about 12 to 16 balls of yarn, wound about the size of a baseball-softball. It works best with 10 - 30 participants.



Weaving a Web Class by Fr. Ed Coppinger

Photo by Fr. Ed Coppinger

## WALKING WITH BOB

Continued from page 8

the Friday afternoon practice, and were proud of their accomplishments. Costumes were willingly made by the mothers, and sometimes by the girls themselves. I think the girls liked me, but they were happiest when Bob would stop by the practice session for a short pep talk.

To quote Bob, "A dance choir is a religious group. It is not a concert group performing in a theater. It is important for the participants to feel that they are ministering through the medium of the dance." Another point that Bob emphasized was facial expressions. A beautifully moving body loses credence if the face shows no expression. The dancers must know what they are expressing and why! This is why it is so important that the script be read to them before the session, and/or the music played or sung. In the case of a reading, they must understand the thought. Then the body will follow, "as the night the day," the meaning of the prayer or reading.

Many times, I have heard Bob say: "Stress the **purity of line** and, above all **keep it simple!** In this way, the expression of the

face, the movements of the body, and the earnestness and innocence of the performers will make the dance a memorable, heart-warming, and spirit-lifting experience!!" Bob's services were much praised and his charismatic delivery made him very popular and beloved.

Bob was a founder and long-time Board member of the Religious Arts Guild, an adjunct of the National Headquarters of the Unitarian Church in Boston. In 1940 he wrote a pamphlet: "The Sacred Dance," which reached a large body of Dance Directors and Dancers. These people formed a group, which they called: The Eastern Regional Sacred Dance Association. This group quickly drew the attention of many dancers and dance directors as members from all parts of the country. It soon outgrew its title, and in February of 1958, it became THE SACRED DANCE GUILD. Bob, of course, was an honored founder of this group, and worked for many months to develop procedures and rules for the organization.

One of my earliest and most memorable experiences in sacred dance was my participation, at Bob's invitation, as he read, "A Ver-

nal Creed," written by a friend and contemporary, Dr. Waldemar W. Argow. In November, 1968, my husband's work on Apollo was over, and we departed Winchester and moved far across the country to Rochester, Minnesota, where we live today. It was hard for me to leave Bob and the Motion Choir, but he told me that he would be retiring soon, and his Winchester sacred dance epoch would come to a close. This was my first realization that he was in poor health, and it was difficult for me to accept that my idol could have weaknesses like other people.

We visit relatives in New England every other year, and we always visited Bob on these trips. It was hard to accept Bob's steady decline, but he would not allow long faces in his room. He passed away on March 8, 1987, at the age of 83, and is buried in Waltham, Massachusetts, the town in which he was born. Through the years, his pedagogy and inspiration, have been a strong motivating force and source of strength in my work with the Sacred Dance Guild and my sacred dance choir, the Seraphim, in Rochester.



# IS IT DANCE OR IS IT PERFORMANCE? (A Forum on Sacred Dance in Catholic Liturgy)

**KAREN JOSEPHSON:** Words mean different things to different people. Words bring up so many connotations to people and can so easily be misinterpreted. The meaning of the word "perform" changed over time and now describes for many people a very narrow realm of staged offerings, but it originally meant to do something fully with one's whole self. As an educator I am performing in the classroom for the benefit of my students' learning. As a secular performer, I feel I owe not only audience but also God who gave me this gift my full engagement in fully performing the truth and hope of life. I believe that everyone who leads worship has a responsibility to "perform" whether it is reading scripture, preaching, praying, serving at communion, singing or dancing. Everyone has the privilege and great obligation to do it fully—for God and God's work. Performance is not for oneself, it is submitting oneself so that God can be fully present and engage that individual at that moment for God's work in leading the people in worship.

There is evidence that Jesus danced with the disciples. When the church got started, dance became controversial. Some of it had to do with the Jews not wanting to eat with or dance with Gentiles. Scholars indicate that the early Christians danced whenever they came together to break bread, pray and sing. When the first cathedrals were built in the reign of Constantine during the fourth century there were elaborate dances done by priests, altar boys, deacons, etc. While these dances waned over the years for a number of reasons, all movements of today's liturgy including processions, a recessional and bows, etc. are remnants of earlier more intricate dance.

Women, not allowed to lead dancing in the churches, danced in the graveyards believing that the departed saints would come and dance with them. Evidence indicates that these events sometimes became orgies. At every church council meeting throughout history dancing was a topic. Women and their tombstoneappings and priests dancing in public with "riff raff" joining the church became big issues.

The Protestant Reformation removed much of the arts from their liturgies, but were ultimately persuaded to keep some forms of music. The Catholic Counter Reformation then felt they could finally throw out dancing once and for all. So all Christian traditions thought they had solved this dance problem which had plagued them for centuries.

We all know that God is a dancer, so dance will never go away. I applaud all of you who use "ministry" or "offering" or "prayer" or other words which do not cause people to throw up immediate barriers. "Movement Choir" is a great term. If we are to journey

back to dancing congregations, we need to know our congregations and be sensitive to them. We need to use a language they can hear and be open to. We need to wear "costumes" that are not offensive and move/dance in such a way that we can lead worshippers into a closer communion with God.

One of our tasks as Christians is to reclaim things for God. All of the things of the world were once God's and now we allow secularists to dictate what is in their realm, and sadly we too often relent. Sometimes it's words, sometimes it's music. I often dance in liturgies to secular songs: "Fly Me to the Moon" was one of my favorites. Martin Luther brought children's ditties and tavern drinking songs into his services with new words, e.g. "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." A good example for all of us in reclamation.

Neither dance nor performance is a four-letter word, and neither is dance. One of our tasks is to reclaim these words for God. This can be done by gently guiding and using words people can hear, and by demonstrating the power in both of these words. And I do believe we are moving in that direction, albeit slowly. But God has all the time in the world.

**CARLA DeSOLA:** In her book "The Spirit Moves" describes the act of dance prayer (all of our dances inside the church and out should be prayers). She says that the Holy Spirit in us is the dancer, Jesus is our partner, and God is the recipient. If our Spirits are dancing with Jesus for God, should we not do it fully, should we not perform?

**KATHRYN MIHELICK:** I have gone through an evolution regarding how to perceive liturgical dance. I used to adamantly insist that it was not a performance, but was a prayer. I've come to realize that it is both, and that they are not mutually exclusive. A performance consists of taking the gifts given us by God and doing everything we can to make them as effective as possible in performing the function at hand. Webster defines it as "the execution of an action," "the act or process of performing or carrying out." We are executing an action in praise and honor of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, offered for the greater glory of God! We are "performing" this action with our whole minds, bodies, hearts, whole spirits to the very best of our God-given ability. God is worthy of no less. I was happy to see that Father Bob VerEecke agrees with this. He puts it this way "...isn't it the nature of ritual leadership to 'perform'?" Effective presiders, preachers, soloists and choirs are such because they are good performers. Liturgy is by nature a dialogue between performance and prayer."

The next time a music director tells you choreographed dance is only a performance, you might ask if the musicians follow a musical score and the choir sings with set lyrics. It certainly appears that they are also

performing. Does this mean, then, that their offerings are not prayer and worship? Is there a double standard here?

**ROSALIE BRANIGAN:** I cannot say strongly enough how much I agree with Michele White on the performance issue. I have been preaching that sermon for twenty years. I even wrote a piece to put in bulletins when we danced because of the minister who would say that "the dancer choir from ABQ has come to perform for us this morning." I know we are a "performing art" but we do ourselves no favor when we are thought of as performing in church—especially children. The audience is God (or a Supreme Being) and we are there to lead people to a deeper understanding of their faith.

**KAT PETTYCREW:** Sacred dance, for me, is a way to articulate what I cannot say in words, whether prayer, praise, or supplication. I'm not a professional mover and I have very little experience with dance of any type. But if I let the Spirit move me, I can communicate with the One Power, and sometimes share with others. For me, sacred dance is also a mission to share my faith with others who might not hear word. If I let the Power spread out with my movements, it might touch someone, somewhere, at the right time. I'm not sure I'd care to define sacred dance any more than I would care to define religion or faith.

**KATHRYN MIHELICK:** While the meaning of sacred dance is personal for each of us, in general I believe it is an offering of the whole self—body, mind, heart, and spirit—in communication with that Higher Power which we have come to recognize as the sustaining force in our lives. Movement is the universal language which speaks across cultures, and transcends the spoken word to manifest the spirit. "To move is human....to dance is divine."

**P. MERLE WADE:** We are sacred dancers. We understand that we are not the first nor will we be the last, but for this moment in time we are responsible for strengthening and maintaining the integrity of the Sacred Dance Guild. We are responsible for building on the past; respecting the history of the Guild and holding in the highest regard not only those who founded the Guild but also, all those who have tirelessly served in leadership positions. We strive to build with dignity, pave the way, create new and innovative projects and, at the same time, uphold our spiritual sacred principles. We focus on the future. Our actions and activities today will determine what and where the Sacred Dance Guild will be tomorrow. We give recognition to the experts in dance, to the teachers, the performers, and to all who are faithful to the calling of dancing in the spirit.

We radiate with optimism. We are kind, thoughtful, courteous, considerate, supportive and loving!



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## RECOMMENDED READING / VIEWING

Soul to Sole With Seniors by Margaret Taylor Doane with Jeannine Bunyan, The Sharing Company, 6226 Bernhard Ave., Richmond, CA 94805-1658, \$9.95 + S&H \$3.00. (For an article on this new book, see Theme in this issue.) This is a MUST for all SDG members

An Invitation to Christian Yoga by Nancy Roth (96 pp., paperback) R1011M \$14.95, The Rev. Nancy L. Roth, 330 Morgan Street, Oberlin, OH 44074. (The following description is taken from the book jacket:) "Although hatha yoga is increasingly popular as a source of spiritual well-being, few Christians have discovered that it is also a unique way to worship God through the ancient practices and disciplines of body prayer. Roth offers an introduction to yoga as a Christian discipline of prayer, then gives a series of short exercises that are clearly explained and helpfully illustrated in simple line drawings. She also provides a short biblical text, frequently from the Psalms, to accompany each exercise as a basis for meditation. Alternative versions of the movements are offered for those of us who are elderly, recovering from illness or injury, or simply less limber than we used to be."

The Lamb's Supper - The Mass as Heaven on Earth by Scott Hahn (Hardcover, 174 pages) \$19.95, Leaflet Missal Company, 976 West Minnehaha Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104. (The following is taken from the book jacket: "Hahn explains that 'what we celebrate on Earth is a mysterious participation in the heavenly liturgy.'"

For the SDG Members who would like the history of the Guild from 1958 through 1992: And We Have Danced by Carlyn Reed, The Sharing Company, 6226 Bernhard Ave., Richmond, CA 94005, \$5.95 plus \$3.00 postage. And We Have Danced, Volume II by Toni Intravala, \$15.00 plus \$3.00 postage, 201 Hewitt, Carbondale, IL 62901.

Do write The Sharing Company for other titles on sacred dance.

## FAMILY NOTES

P. Merle Wade writes that Colley Ballou's ashes were buried in the yard of her church, St. Paul Church, (10 St. Paul Place, Nutley, New Jersey 07110) after the morning service on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Committee for Sacred Dance Guild Festival 2002 deeply regrets that Virginia Huffine was not able to perform "A Vernal Creed" during our Flower Communion Service, and we missed her gracious presence. We pray for a swift and complete recovery from her illness, and hope that she will be able to attend future Festivals. (Mary Jane Wolbers)

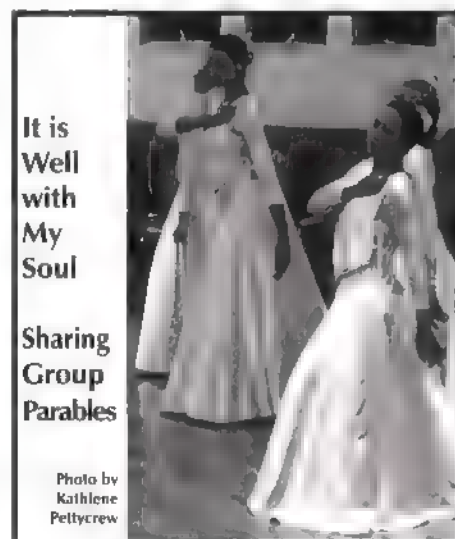
The Sacred Dance Guild sends get well wishes to Helen Lesniak who is recovering from a leg injury and to Karen Josephson who is recovering from a flu-like illness.

## Memories! Memories!

By Mary Jane Wolbers, Archivist

Members who had personal encounters with Sacred Dance Guild pioneers (Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Robert Storer, Ruby Henderson, Virginia Lucke, etc.) are urged to contribute to our compilation of narrations, photographs and memorabilia concerning these dancers to whom we owe so much for our existence as an international organization. Granted, the piece which Virginia Huffine wrote on "Working With Bob" (reprinted in this *Journal*) is a hard act to follow. However, yours will be uniquely exemplary and greatly treasured. Yours are important insights into the lives of those who made it possible for us to dance our faith in such diverse and rewarding ways today.

About those photos: please include persons, places and dates to identify them. Black-and-white and sepia-tone photos reproduce well on a color copy machine. We can use either originals or photocopies.



It is  
Well  
with  
My  
Soul

Sharing  
Group  
Parables

Photo by  
Kathlene  
Pettycrow

## The Gathering Dance

By Mary Jane Wolbers

The Gathering Dance for Festival 2002, taught by Mary Jane Wolbers at the conclusion of her "Preparing for the Climb," opened our instructional sessions at Franklin Pierce College. We sang as we danced: "We have come to the mountain to rejoice," and "We'll all sing praises when we dance."

The figures (8 counts each) are forward 8 / outside under / forward 8 / inside under / circle left / circle right / forward and back / inside and outside arch, passing middle dancer in the group to the set ahead. It's a mixer, performed in 3's, with the middle person changing with each repetition of figures



## Report of Sacred Dance Guild Festival 2002

On Thursday, July 11, 2002, sacred dance enthusiasm infiltrated the campus of Franklin Pierce College as dancers arrived for the weeklong Festival. The Conference Center fulfilled the needs of the Festival Committee, the faculty and participants.

The introductory evening included faculty presentations by the Festival Committee and dances led by Jim Maynard from the Southern California Chapter. Saturday morning marked the beginning of daily intensive classes and workshops for approximately 120 dancers. Mary Jane Wolbers provided an inspirational start with "Preparing for the Climb."

The banquet on Saturday evening was the first traditional New England dinner for many of the dancers (roast beef and gravy, mashed potatoes, steamed carrots, tossed salad, and strawberry shortcake with real whipped cream). Following the dinner a



Shaker song and dance program directed by Mary Ann Haagan was presented in the Meeting house. The Annual Meeting followed.

Performances of the "Experience the Journey" included the Angkor Dance Troupe, a professional Cambodian Dance group from Lowell, Massachusetts with a Blessing dance, a Thunder and Lightning dance, and a harvest folk danced called "Picking Krovine." The Skyloom dancers contributed "Song of the Skyloom," choreographed for presentation at the Festival. Also included were Kathryn Mihelick and Andrea Shearer with "Covenant Journey" and "Two Hearts, One Word;" Sylvia

Bryant's choreography of James Weldon Johnson's "Creation" (in honor of Ruby Henderson for whom our Memorial Endowment Fund was established); Patricia Woodbury and Sacred Dance President Karen Josephson with "May I Be His Love." The Nataraj dancers, from the University of Massachusetts under the direction of Rajaana Devi, performed two pieces.

The tour to the Canterbury Shaker Village was enthusiastically received. There were workshop and demonstrations throughout the day exhibiting all aspects of Shaker daily life and their integration of daily routine tasks into their spiritual life. A Shaker inspired luncheon was enjoyed by all followed by a music program to end the day.

A special Unitarian Flower Communion was led by Peterborough Unitarian Church minister, Sarah Clark, dedicated in memory of Robert Storer. Virginia Huffine contributed the words of the Vernal Creed, pictures of Robert Storer, and information regarding his work in ministry and in the Sacred Dance Guild.

On Monday the popular Celtic Brenga Astkur performed; on Wednesday contra dance callers and musicians Dudley and Jacqueline Laufman. Evening Sharing Sessions provided opportunities for appreciation of the dedication of sacred dancers and their worship expression. The Silent Auction brought in money that will be applied to the Memorial endowment Fund to benefit scholarships.

On Friday, Father Ed Coppinger led a closing worship. Also participants had a tour of the University of New Hampshire Dimond Library to see the Special Collections Department where the Sacred Dance Guild Archives are stored.

Festival 2002 Director Vivian Nicholl thanks all who came and contributed their spiritual talents, helping hands, and enthusiasm to ensure a successful event.

## Cultural Exchange Program

The American Dance Guild, collegial status with the SDG, announces another groundbreaking step with its Cultural Exchange Program with Poland. ADG member dance companies and educators will tour to Poland, teaching, performing, and advising on curriculum development. By working with the Polish dance community to have contemporary dance recognized in their educational system, the Guild will be helping to develop the field on an international level.

Marilynn Danitz, president, reports: Our concert this fall focuses on the Masterworks of the 20th Century, with prominent dance personalities speaking about their working process with the major choreographers of the time. The Guild will host a gala concert as Memorial to those lost in the Sept. 11th tragedy. Dancers from across the nation will perform in a benefit to aid the families of the deceased.

## In Remembrance and Service

By Mary Jane Wolbers

The Memorial Endowment fund of the Sacred Dance Guild was established in memory of Ruby Henderson, a dear friend from my early days of involvement with the Guild. More recently, two other valued friends, Virginia Lucke and Robert Storer, have gone to join Ruby's celestial dance and have been added to the list of those memorialized by this Fund. My regular contributions to the Endowment are a tribute to these treasured members and a means of supporting the scholarships it makes possible.

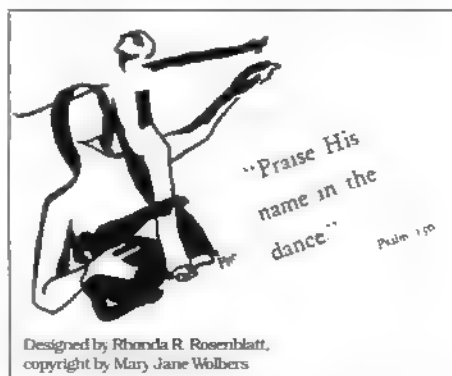
Over the years, my personal donations have been augmented by fund-raisers, Silver Teas, and a variety of volunteer dance services (leadership training, choreography, workshop consultations, performances). My choirs and I do not accept reimbursement for services; any gifts we receive beyond expenses incurred go to the Guild's Memorial Endowment Fund. Such sources are always welcome, but by nature have not been consistent enough to satisfy my commitment to the cause.

In 1974, I decided to initiate a project which would be on-going and guarantee a source of funding for my gifts to the Endowment. With the help of an artist, I had notecards designed\*, printed and made available for purchase by anyone wanting them. The cost of printing and mailing is deducted from payments received; the balance goes to the Fund.

The notecards are printed on white stock and come with matching envelopes. The design is printed in purple, the inside is blank. Artistic credit and "designed for the Memorial Endowment Fund of the Sacred Dance Guild" are inscribed on the back.

They are sold in sets of ten. For use in large quantities as Christmas and Easter cards, wedding invitations or other special events, advance notice is advised. A pack is \$12.50.

I have now added tote bags to the project, using the same design. The totes are 14" by 16", with purple artwork on natural canvas fabric. The cost is \$15.00. Again, the cost of



producing and mailing the totes is deducted from payments received, the balance is donated to the Fund.

I appreciate the opportunity to remember the past and enliven the future by contributing to the Fund. The visions of Ruby, Virginia and Bob will be sustained by those whose work is enabled through Guild scholarships. Others who feel equally committed are encouraged to devise plans which will enable them to contribute to the Fund, be it out of savings, fund-raisers, and/or estate planning. Mary Jane Wolbers, P.O. Box 8, Temple, NH 03084

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# World Dance Alliance News

By Mary Jane Wolbers

The WDA was formed as a primary voice for dance and dancers throughout the world, and to encourage the exchange of ideas and the awareness of dance in all its forms. It was developed in plenary sessions at the international conference in Hong Kong, under the leadership of the late Dr. Carl Wolz\*, in 1990. The Sacred Dance Guild was one of the participating organizations that laid the foundation for what was to become an expression of Wolz's dream "to use dance to unify the human race."

WDA Americas is one of three global centers, the others are Asia-Pacific and Europe. WDA Africa is currently being developed. Global WDA Assemblies are held in even-numbered years, and Regional in odd-numbered years. By the time this issue of the *Sacred Dance Guild Journal* is in our members' hands, the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Assembly in Duesseldorf, Germany,

August 23-29, 2002 will be history. Plans for Assembly 2004, will have been announced.

Currently on the schedule is WDA Americas 2003, to be held April 23 to 27, 2003, in Santo Domingo. The focus of this conference is "Contemporary Traditions: Why People Dance Today." Of fifteen suggested topics for presentation, none concerned dance as a dimension of worship, although the call for proposals, due August 15, 2002, read: "Topics may include but are not limited to those listed."

Dance and the Child International (daCi) and Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) work closely with WDA. It is hoped that the Sacred Dance Guild will be represented at the Dominican Assembly next April. Individual Guild members who also hold membership in WDA will have an opportunity to register at a reduced rate by the stated deadline. Those

interested in attending are advised to explore options with the Guild Executive Board as soon as possible.

\*The international dance world mourns the death of Wolz on January 2, 2002, at the age of 69 after a long battle with cancer.

## From Mary Jane Wolbers, Archivist:

The Festival 2002 Registration program included a listing of "Sacred Dance Guild Festivals Through the Years." Thanks to the recent acquisition of Festivals materials for the Archives, and input from Festival '02 participants, an updated and corrected list is being prepared. The revised list, complete with names of Festival directors, will be printed in the *Sacred Dance Guild Journal*, Winter 2003 issue, and put on our website.

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## SDG CHAPTER NEWS

### CONSTITUTION CHAPTER

Kay Troxell: Because the Constitution Chapter covers such a large area of Eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and Southern New Jersey, we have been encouraging small sharing sessions called "Neighborhood Gatherings" to help us get acquainted within our various areas. Several years ago Ruth Ann Rude hosted a Philadelphia group.

The last Sunday in September the Lancaster/Harrisburg/Reading area hosted an afternoon gathering focused on dances for Advent and Christmas. This allowed enough time for folks to return to their dance groups and make use of some of the dances and ideas they've shared. The Reverend Dana Schlegel and Kay Troxell chose the theme: a late September Sunday from 2 to 4:30 p.m. the meeting was held in the Fellowship Hall of the Lancaster Rohrerstown Salem U.C.C. Church. All were invited to bring their dance choirs and interested friends. Those who were not members were encouraged to join the Guild. We offer this format to other Chapters and Regions. Con-

stitution Chapter's regular Chapter workshop is always the third Saturday in October.

### NEW YORK/SW CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

Carol Sundquest: New spirit is flowing into our chapter with more attendance at recent workshops and new officers. We have three new officers: Irene Clark as program chairperson, Suzanne Gorman-Smith as treasurer, and Lauren Steele as secretary. We especially appreciate their involvement in our chapter. A big thank you to Dina Mann, Phillip Paris, and Joyce Smille for their extra call of officer duty.

The last workshop of the year on May 5<sup>th</sup> "Forgiveness and Love in Motion," was led by different members who brought together a varied program from simple gestures to challenging choreography involving props. This variety added richness to sacred spirituality.

### SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Praise God in the Dance with *Alleluia Dance Theater* was presented October 18-20 at the La Casa de Maria in Santa Barbara.

### Regional Directors 2002-2003

Alabama: Deborah Mauldin Halloway  
Alaska: Noelle Partusch  
Arizona: Faye Beck  
Arkansas: See Mississippi  
Connecticut: See Massachusetts  
Florida: Carolyn Greene  
Georgia: Dana Phelps Marschalk  
Idaho:  
Iowa: Dorian Byrd  
Kansas: See Missouri  
Kentucky: Sally Rothenburger  
Louisiana: Betty Wooddy  
Maine:  
Massachusetts: Rosa Brown  
Michigan: Yulonda Townsel  
Minnesota:  
Mississippi:  
Missouri: Marty Campbell  
Montana: Maryse DiMeglio  
Nebraska: Rev. Nancy Phillips  
Nevada: Deborah Smith  
New Hampshire: Vivian Nicholl  
New Jersey: Sylvia Bryant  
New Mexico: See Arizona  
North Carolina:  
North Dakota:  
Oklahoma: Georgeana Rainwater  
Oregon/South Washington: Sharon Miller  
Rhode Island: See Massachusetts  
South Carolina: Karen M. Funchess  
South Dakota: Jerilynn Ommen  
Tennessee: Wendy Behr  
Texas: Sr. Martha Ann Kirk  
Utah: Jennifer Deml  
Vermont: Edward Webster (Ted)  
Washington: Amy Wyatt  
Wyoming: Joyce Barnard  
Canada: (Ontario Region): Ruth Richardson  
Canada: (Western)  
Taiwan: Li-Chu Chang  
International: Deborah Bethell

### CHAPTERS:

Canadian National Capital Chapter: Eastern Canada  
Constitution Chapter: Eastern Penn., Del., Southern NJ  
Hawaii Chapter  
Lakeshore Chapter: Ind., Ill., Wisconsin  
New York, SW Conn. Chapter  
Northern California Chapter  
Oh-Penn Chapter: Ohio Western Penn.  
Potomac Chapter: DC, MD, VA, W. Va.  
Rocky Mountain Chapter: Colorado  
Southern California Chapter

## SACRED DANCE ACTIVITIES

### ALABAMA

The State of Alabama was well represented at Festival in Rindge, NH. For the Wednesday morning worship service, our Regional Director, Deborah Mauldin designed a riveting Native American style service complete with artifacts chanting and circle prayers.

Past President Joann Flanigan and former Regional Director Judy Styles danced the 121<sup>st</sup> Psalm at the Tuesday evening sharing service. They prepared an altar under the beautiful stained glass window, using scarves, Bible and a basket of flowers. Elaine

Slater of Massachusetts read the Psalm as Joann began the dance. In memory and in celebration of the 36 years of the life of her son Sean, Judy brought forth a special candle to place on the altar.

With eight other dancers, they also performed the Recessional for the final worship service at the beautiful and peaceful Cathedral of the Pines. Choreography was by Kathryn Mihelick and Andrea Shearer of the *Leaven Dance Company*, and the music "May the Peace of the Lord be With You" was by Transfiguration.

## ARCHIVES NEWS

At the 2001 meeting of the American Library Association in San Francisco, California, the Dimond Library at University of New Hampshire (where our Archives are housed) was one of six libraries in the United States to receive their prized Archi-

tectural Award. A jury of three librarians and three architects selected the recipients in a blind review of one hundred sixty applicants.

Items for the Archives continue to be gratefully received. Many thanks!



Photo by Mary Jane Wolbers

**Faculty member Dianne Eno, teaching a session at SDG Festival 2002 in an outdoor amphitheater at Franklin Pierce College, NH.**

## SHARE YOUR SKILLS

The Publications Project of SDG is seeking a member volunteer with desktop publishing capability to reproduce three current pamphlets. Copy with cover and photos is complete. The pamphlets are 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 (8 1/2 x 11 paper folded). The pamphlets are from 8 to 11 pages before folding. Please contact Karen Josephson, President, Sacred Dance Guild.



## MEMOS FROM THE MINUTES

Copies of reports filed at Board Meetings are available to members by request to the President.

### APRIL 2002 MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

The April Meeting of the Executive Board was held at the home of Phyllis Stonebrook in Edgewater, Maryland. A great deal of business was accomplished, beginning with a major effort to clarify, correct and update our policies. In many ways these changes simply reflect current practice. In other cases, they represent improvements thought about but not enacted.

One newly clarified policy which affects many members is that groups holding group membership are responsible for identifying who their members are.

Some of the other business:

Discussion of Chapters and Regions led to plan to hold sessions at Festival 2002 to share ideas and provide some history.

Connie Tyler reported increased use of the website. There are issues to be resolved about who gets listed on the resource data base. There is also a lot of work to do on descriptions of resources.

The Board voted to add highlights from the *Journal* on the website.

In discussing Festivals, and how to provide guidance for those who might agree to organize one, the Board voted to create a Handbook for Festival which will include a time line with reference to *Journal* deadlines and Board Meeting dates. The Board also began work on guidelines, based on issues which have surfaced in recent years. The following guidelines were approved:

1. The faculty concert must represent the Guild's mission and "dance as a language of faith and celebration" to the public.
2. Any monies raised from an auction or silent auction shall be turned in to the Guild Treasurer for Festival scholarships the following year.
3. Worship is to be an integral focus and daily element of the Festival, and should represent the Guild as an interfaith organization.
4. Through selection of presenters and program there should be diversity and balance of cultures, faith expression and dance technique.
5. A proposal, including a budget, must be submitted to the Program Director by anyone wishing to host a Festival.
6. Membership applications must be kept separate from Festival registration.

A committee has been established to work on the Handbook. It is expected that additional guidelines will be developed.

In financial decisions, the Board authorized Carla Kramer to spend funds on consultation for the purpose of improving the equipment for Membership duties, and authorized transfers of funds to make available

money for Festival scholarships from the Memorial Endowment Funds.

The above is a personal and idiosyncratic selection from a day and a half long meeting by Ellen Young, Recording Secretary.

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, Rindge, New Hampshire, July 13, 2002

The 2002 Annual Membership Meeting of the Sacred Dance Guild was held at the Rindge Meeting House in Rindge, New Hampshire. The evening began with a New England roast beef dinner prepared by members of the Church.

At the close of the dinner, President Karen Josephson welcomed two special guests, representatives from collegial affiliations of the Guild: Faith Clark of New Hampshire from the National Dance Association, and Deborah Mauldin from the American Dance Guild, who is also the Sacred Dance Guild's Regional Representative for Alabama.

Karen Josephson then presented those honored by Mary Jane Wolbers for gifts to the Guild Archives: High Honors: Forrest Coggan, Wendy Morrell, Joan Sparrow. Honors: Constitution Chapter, D. Jayne Edwards, Joann Flanigan, Helen Gray, Virginia Huffine, Toni' Intravaia, Sue Johnson, Karen Josephson, Ruth Richardson, Southern California Chapter, Phyllis Stonebrook, Ethel Tibbetts (sister of Robert Storer), Kay Troxell, P. Merle Wade, and Ellen Young.

After dinner, the gathering moved upstairs to the Meeting House for a presentation of Shaker song and movement.

Karen Josephson offered a danced invocation and called the meeting to order at 8:05 p.m. Her State of the Guild report included introduction of Executive Board members, present and absent.

At the conclusion of her report, President Josephson noted that she will be travelling to Duesseldorf, Germany, to represent the Sacred Dance Guild at the World Dance Alliance's Global Dance Forum August 26 to 29, 2002.

Treasurer's Report: Susan S.Y. Johnson gave a summary of her year end report. The Guild had financial assets of \$82,456 at the beginning of the fiscal year, and \$76,970 at the end, June 30, 2002. This represents a 7% loss, part of which is due to the drop in investment values. There is \$55,197 in the Memorial Endowment Fund and \$18,723 in operating cash. Her detailed report was presented to the Executive Board and accepted by them on July 12 and is available on request.

Nominating Committee Report: Chuck Yopst, Chair of the Nominating Committee reported that 72 ballots had been returned, 28 by mail and 44 filled in at the Festival. The vote was unanimous for the slate of candidates. However, thanks in part to additional work by Chapters and Regions Director P. Merle Wade there were changes and additions. For Director at Large, Phil Porter was

replaced by Tamara Mingo. Additional Regional Representatives accepted nomination as follows: Alaska: Noella Partsch; Nevada: Deborah Smith; Montana, Maryse De Luglio; South Carolina: Karen Funchess; and South Dakota: Jerilynn Ommen. Bobbi Wethington (North Carolina) and Brenda Cantelo (Western Canada) declined nomination after the ballot was completed.

Patricia Woodbury moved and Joann Flanigan seconded that all these changes to the slate be accepted. Motion carried.

Chuck Yopst completed his report by handing over the disk with the form for the ballot to his successor, Anne Marks.

President Karen Josephson honored the two Directors at Large: Kathlene Pettycrew and Tamara Mingo.

FESTIVALS: President Karen Josephson thanked Mary Jane Wolbers and Vivian Nicholl for their work on Festival 2002. She also thanked Tanya Cimonetti for her work as Chair of the Scholarship Committee, identifying the four adults and six youth who received scholarships this year.

New Program Chair Rosalie Branigan presented Jim Maynard, who described the location for Festival 2003, Scripps College in Claremont, California. Rosalie and Jim danced "California, here we come" with the aid of an ad hoc chorus.

Marty Campbell presented the call for Festival 2004, "Meet Me in St. Louis," and invited members from other parts of the country to join her committee.

Karen Josephson acknowledged the past Presidents present: Joann Flanigan and Mary Jane Wolbers, followed by Chapter Representatives and Regional Directors. She then asked all past Board members to stand and identify themselves, followed by all current Chapter officers. Finally, she asked all members to stand and be acknowledged as the core and focus of the Guild.

Karen turned the meeting over to Public Relations Director Wendy Morrell for a Powerpoint presentation on the Sacred Dance Guild. Wendy presented a series of slides which showed various elements of the Guild's identity and history. These included: the statement on our brochure, our mission statement from 1998, a sequence of landmark dates since the founding of the Guild as the Eastern Sacred Dance Alliance in 1956, a graph of membership, covers of a number of brochures, and logos of recent Festivals.

Wendy ended her presentation with an invitation to all members to participate in creating the future, and concluded with the assembly singing "Go tell it on the Mountain that Sacred Dance is here."

On motion by Phyllis Stonebrook, seconded by Doug Victor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Ellen Roberts Young*



# CALENDAR

**October 19, 2002** - Constitution Chapter's Autumn Workshop, Location and Details to be announced on the Chapter Website and Calendar or Contact: Kat Pettycrew (609) 567-1936, [pettycrewkd@yahoo.com](mailto:pettycrewkd@yahoo.com).

**October 19-20, 2002** - "Creative Dance: A Moving Weekend" with Doug Victor Providence Zen Center, Rhode Island. Contact: (401) 521-0546 or [doug.dance@juno.com](mailto:doug.dance@juno.com).

**October 20, 2002** - Chapter Workshop, New York/SW Connecticut Chapter, St. Stephen of Hungary Church, New York, NY. Contact: Ann Pomeroy, 845-362-1977 or [davenann2@aol.com](mailto:davenann2@aol.com) or Irene Clark, (212) 754-4353.

**October 23-27, 2002** - Annual American Dance Therapy Association Conference, Burlington, Vermont. Contact: [www.adta.org](http://www.adta.org).

**October 24-27, 2002** - 37th Annual Conference, American Dance Therapy Association, Radisson Hotel, Burlington, VT. Contact: ADTA, 2000 Century Plaza, Suite 108, 10632, Patuxent Parkway, Columbia, MD 21044 or FAX ADTA - (410) 997-4080/also website

**April 23-27, 2003** - WDA Americas Assembly, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Contact: Judith Janney, 433 West 34th St., Apt #8L, New York, NY 10001, (212) 695-3925, FAX: (212) 268-4299 or <http://www.wdaamericas.org>.

**July 17-22, 2003** - "Paths of Radiance," SDG Festival 2003, Scripps College, Claremont, California.

**August 3-10, 2003** - 9th Dance and Child International (daCi) Triennial Conference, Bahia Conference Center, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil: "Breaking Boundaries: Dances, Bodies, and Multiculturalism." Contact: [daci.2003.conference@ig.com.br](mailto:daci.2003.conference@ig.com.br) or visit the web site at [www.daci2003conference.cjb.net](http://www.daci2003conference.cjb.net).

## Executive Board Meetings

Fall Board Meeting: October 18-20, 2002, St. Louis, Missouri

Spring Board Meeting: TBA

Summer Board Meeting: July 17, 2003, Claremont, California

## Sacred Dance Guild Web-Site:

[www.sacreddanceguild.org](http://www.sacreddanceguild.org)

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## RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS

The Sacred Dance Guild has collegial status with the following organizations: This is a reciprocal agreement whereby members of the Guild may attend activities of these organizations at the same fee their own members pay (proof of SDG membership is required). Members of these organizations may attend Guild activities in the same way.

American Dance Guild, P. O. Box 2006, Lenox Hill Station, New York, NY 10021 (212) 932-2789.

International Liturgical Dance Association (ILDA) of NPM (National Association of Pastoral Musicians), 3215 Bellacre Court, Cincinnati, OH 45248-5005 (513) 451-6746.

National Dance Association, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091 (703) 476-3436

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